

PATENT  
Serial No. 10/520,198  
Amendment in Reply to Office Action mailed on December 29, 2005

IN THE DRAWING

Please replace FIG 3 with the enclosed replacement FIG 3.

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REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action dated November 29, 2005, which has been reviewed and carefully considered.

Claims 1-8 have been amended which are the only claims pending in this application. Claims 1, 3 and 8 are the only independent claims.

Reconsideration and allowance of the application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

By means of the present amendment, the drawings have been amended to add I/O nodes 120, 130 for better conformance with the specification, such as page 8, lines 9-12. A replacement sheet including FIG 3 is enclosed. Applicants respectfully request approval of the enclosed proposed drawing changes.

By means of the present amendment, the specification has been amended for better conformance to U.S. practice and to correct an informality noted upon review.

By means of the present amendment, claims 1-8 have been

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amended for better conformance to U.S. practice, such as beginning the dependent claims with 'The' instead of 'A', and changing "characterized in that" to --wherein--. Claims 1-8 were not amended in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the specification and drawings for missing a clear description of interconnects in the specification, and for failure to show the interconnects in the drawings as recited in claim 1. In response, the claims have been amended to delete references to the interconnects. Accordingly, withdrawal of objection to the specification and the drawings is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claim 3 contains patentable subject matter. By means of the present amendment, claim 3 has been written in independent form including amendments that are believed not to affect patentability thereof, as well as not including the features of intervening claim 2 which are believed to be not necessary for patentability.

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Further, independent claims 1 and 8 have also be amended to include a feature similar to that of allowable claim 3. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 8 should also be allowable. In additions, claims 2 and 4-7 should be allowable at least based on their dependence from independent claim 1.

In addition, Applicants deny any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicants reserve the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

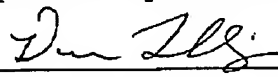
It is believed that no additional fees or charges are currently due. However, in the event that any additional fees or charges are required for entrance of the accompanying amendment, they may be charged to Applicants' representatives Deposit Account No. 50-3649. In addition, please credit any overpayments related to any fees paid in connection with the accompanying amendment to

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Deposit Account No. 50-3649.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By   
Dicran Halajian, Reg. 39,703  
Attorney for Applicant(s)  
March 29, 2006

Enclosure: Replacement drawing sheet (1 sheet with FIG 3)

THORNE & HALAJIAN, LLP  
Applied Technology Center  
111 West Main Street  
Bay Shore, NY 11706  
Tel: (631) 665-5139  
Fax: (631) 665-5101